

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-04 INR-07 L-03 ACDA-07
NSAE-00 PA-01 SS-15 PRS-01 SP-02 USIA-06 TRSE-00
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INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE
CINCLANT NORFOLK VA
USLOSACLANT NORFOLK VA
AMEMBASSY OSLO
AMEMBASSY OTTAWA
AMEMBASSY ROME
USNMR SHAPE BE
USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER

S E C R E T NATO 04675

E.O. 11652: GDS-1
TAGS: PFOR, NATO, MNUC, NPG
SUBJECT: NPG MEMBERSHIP

SUMMARY: IN RECENT CONVERSATIONS, NORWEGIAN, ITALIAN
AND FRG REPS HAVE SOUGHT OUT U.S. VIEWS ON NPG MEMBERSHIP,
IN REACTION TO CANADIAN EFFORTS TO DRUM UP SUPPORT FOR
A POSSIBLE INITIATIVE AT OTTAWA TO TERMINATE THE PRESENT
ROTATIONAL SYSTEM. OUR RESPONSES WERE NON-COMMITTAL.
IT IS CLEAR THEIR POSITIONS WILL BE TIED PRIMARILY TO
U.S. ATTITUDES. END SUMMARY.

1. DURING JUNE 1 AND 2, NORWEGIAN, ITALIAN AND GERMAN
REPRESENTATIVES RAISED SEPARATELY WITH MISSION OFFICER THE
QUESTION OF NPG MEMBERSHIP. THEY EACH NOTED THAT CANADIAN
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AMBASSADOR HARDY WAS CANVASSING NPG DELEGATIONS IN
CONNECTION WITH POSSIBLE CANADIAN INITIATIVE AT THE
OTTAWA NPG MEETING AIMED TOWARD TERMINATION OF THE
ROTATIONAL ELEMENT OF NPG MEMBERSHIP. THEY WANTED TO
KNOW U.S. VIEWS.

2. MISSION OFFICER SAID HE DID NOT KNOW CURRENT

WASHINGTON THINKING, BUT SAID HIS AUTHORITIES WOULD BE ATTENTIVE TO ALLIED VIEWS. HE NOTED THAT SECRETARY BROWN WOULD BE ATTENDING HIS FIRST NPG AT OTTAWA AND THEREFORE, MAY WISH TO HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO EVALUATE HIS OWN IMPRESSIONS OF THE FORUM AS PRESENTLY CONSTITUTED. MISSION OFFICER THOUGHT THEREFORE, THAT SECRETARY BROWN MIGHT CHOOSE TO BE IN A LISTENING MOOD IF MEMBERSHIP WAS RAISED AT OTTAWA.

3. ALLIED REPRESENTATIVES HAD THE FOLLOWING COMMENTS IN THEIR CONVERSATIONS WITH MISSION OFFICER:

- (A) NORWEGIAN REP (LUNDE) SAID NORWAY WOULD WELCOME NPG EXPANSION, BUT WOULD BE GUIDED IN ITS APPROACH PRIMARILY BY U.S. AND U.K. VIEWS. HE NOTED THAT IN THE PAST THERE HAD BEEN A GENERAL FEELING AMONG ALLIES THAT THE U.S. WOULD CUT DOWN THE PROVISION OF INFORMATION IN AN EXPANDED NPG. HE SAW NO SECURITY GROUNDS FOR REDUCING INFORMATION, BUT THOUGHT HIS AUTHORITIES WOULD NOT FIND EXPANDED MEMBERSHIP DESIRABLE IF SUCH AN OUTCOME NEVERTHELESS WERE TO OCCUR.

- (B) ITALIAN REP (CIARRAPICO) SAID U.S. VIEWS WERE OF PRINCIPAL IMPORTANCE FOR HIS AUTHORITIES. HE DID NOT KNOW HOW MINISTER LATTANZIO MIGHT RESPOND TO THIS ISSUE IN OTTAWA, BUT THOUGHT HE WOULD BE INFLUENCED BY THE (QUOTE) ATMOSPHERE (END QUOTE) AT THE MEETING. HE SAID, SPEAKING ON A PERSONAL BASIS, THAT NPG MEMBERSHIP WAS A SENSITIVE ISSUE FOR ITALY. HE CITED ITALY'S STRATEGIC

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POSITION IN THE MEDITERRANEAN WHICH HE THOUGHT CONFERRED A SPECIAL STATUS ON ITALY. HE REFERRED SEVERAL TIMES TO THE ITALIAN DOMESTIC POLITICAL SITUATION, NOTING THAT DURING 1976 THE GOVERNMENT USED ITALY'S ROLE IN NATO, INCLUDING ITS PERMANENT POSITION ON THE NPG AS WELL AS BASES AND OTHER CONSIDERATIONS, TO FEND OFF ARGUMENTS IN FAVOR OF ACCEPTING COMMUNIST PARTICIPATION IN THE CABINET. HE SAID THE COMMUNIST PROBLEM REMAINED, AND WAS SIMPLY LESS CRITICAL AT THE MOMENT. HE SAID THE U.S. NUCLEAR UMBRELLA HAD MADE IT UNNECESSARY FOR ITALY TO OPT FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF ITS OWN NUCLEAR CAPABILITY, BUT HE THOUGHT ITALY'S RELATIVE WEIGHT IN EUROPE WARRANTED IT HAVING A SPECIAL POSITION IN NATO NUCLEAR AFFAIRS. REFERRING TO THE OTTAWA MEETING, HE THOUGHT CANADA WOULD FEEL FREER TO PRESS FOR EXPANDED NPG MEMBERSHIPS, BEING ON ITS HOME GROUND; HE UNDERSTOOD THE NETHERLANDS WOULD LEND SUPPORT.

- (C) FRG REP (MERKL) SAID HIS AUTHORITIES HAD MAINTAINED A NEUTRAL POSITION WHEN APPROACHED BY CANADA,

WHILE STATING THAT THEIR VIEW WOULD BE DETERMINED BY
U.S. ATTITUDES. HE SAID, IN RESPONSE TO MISSION OFFICER'S
COMMENTS, THAT HE THOUGHT HIS AUTHORITIES WOULD NOT WISH
THE NPG TO MOVE PRECIPITOUSLY ON THIS ISSUE. BENNETT

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